

The PENNANT

A PUBLICATION OF THE PEN COLLECTORS OF AMERICA, INC.

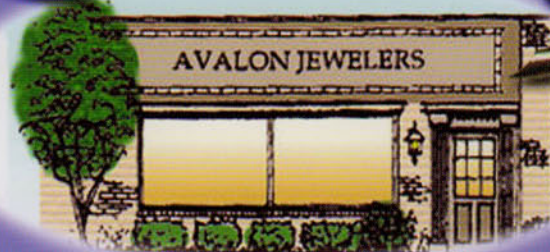
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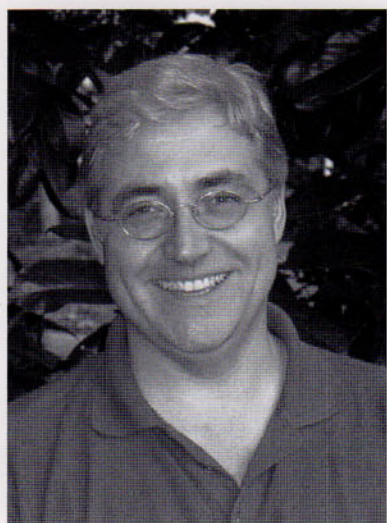
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THE PEN UNDERGROUND ... What Did You Do With Your Pens Today?



I'VE PARTICIPATED IN MANY BARROOM CONVERSATIONS AT PEN SHOWS FOCUSED ON THE future of the hobby of pen collecting. As editor of this magazine I've run an article by a well-known collector musing on just that topic. And, for the most part, these are dark conversations wondering if the hobby has a future at all. I'm sure that I've uttered that exact thought myself after a beverage or two.

But, recently, I've begun to find evidence of a spring in the landscape of bleak mid-winter. Like daffodils pushing up through the snow, I've found a new generation of pen freaks and geeks who are unabashed in their joy when it comes to writing instruments. And, even more than that, they are using their pens. To write letters. To other people. Everyday. Sometimes even people they don't know!

So, where, you might ask is this "Pen Underground" of resistance fighters bravely battling the tide of e-mail and electronica? Well, they're on the Internet. Yep, that's right. They are out there in the Blogosphere and they are having an absolute ball writing about how much they love pens.

I took a weekend last month (hmmm, that sounds like a Jimmy Buffet song) and spent some time searching out the various pen-related blogs I could find. These are not the ones you'll find on websites related to selling pens, such as those of Richard Binder and Rick Propas—fine though those may be. No, these were just folk out there who love their pens. And my quick search found well over two dozen sites all about pens, writing instruments, letter writing, mail art and all sorts of other things you can do with your pens. And, somewhat to my surprise, many of these folks are using fountain pens. Some are even using vintage fountain pens—lots of Esties out there in the Blogosphere.

And while two dozen websites is a small number compared to, say, the number of ones on various right- and left-wing political conspiracy theories, it is far more than you'd have found five years ago. And, judging from the dearth of gray hair in the profile pictures of these bloggers, they may well be much younger than the average age of the folks I've sat with those hotel lobby bars at pen shows.

I've found blogs dedicated to low-end office pens—such as rollerballs, Sharpies and the like (officesupplygeek.com). I found websites where the bloggers were methodically working their way through every color of Diamine ink and posting pictures of ink swatches and discussing how each color compared to ones of similar hues from other manufacturers (all-my-hues.livejournal.com). Looking for a pen pal? How about We Love Snail Mail (welovesnailmail.webs.com).

By the way, letter writing, mail art and related topics make up a complete subcategory of websites related to writing instruments. There are sites where you can find a pen pal or just look at some amazing works of mail art (a category I'd never thought of before this quest began) that various bloggers have sent or received. Many of these enthusiasts make their own envelopes and small, elaborately decorated packages to send to their friends. I'm amazed at how some of them seem to survive handling in the mail when they are sent internationally. And, again, many of these bloggers are using fountain pens as well as an array of markers, ballpoints, rollerballs, brush pens, pencils and other writing tools. I even received a letter from one of these enthusiasts that used a dip pen.

The common thread on all of these sites, if such a thing exists, is that there is a joy in putting ink to paper. And while these are a minority, we must remember that even in the glory days of fountain pens in the last century, the most used writing instrument in the U.S. remained the pencil. Pens are never going to be the writing instrument of choice for the vast majority. But, judging by what my short weekend journey discovered, the thrill of ink on the page is still there for a select minority of us.

So, I've included a smattering of the websites I found in a sidebar to this rambling (see page 4). Check out some of these sites and do your own Googling (or Binging as the case may be) to see what you come up with. And, these bloggers all link you out to many other bloggers from their sites. You'll find all kinds of pen-related places out there and, who knows, you might even make some new friends and find a pen pal!

Richard Jarvis
Managing Editor

FROM OUR PEN PALS

Dear Editor,

Congratulations on another excellent issue of *The Pennant*. I especially loved the cover layout displaying items of three different centuries.

I enjoyed reading the articles by Mike Walker. His "Observations on the Social Hazards of Being a Fountain Pen Collector" reflected my feelings exactly about my pen collection.

Sincerely,

John A Finkbiner, Winter Haven, Fla.

Tom and Dede:

Thanks for your work on my articles in the recent issue of *The Pennant*, and thanks for including them. I was pleased with the layout on the "Instructive Imprint" article. In fact the art in the whole issue was well done.

I thought the article on inks was especially attractive with all the color from the ink bottles making the article really come alive. I thought the cover art was also outstanding. I think that was your photo, Tom.

Thanks for the work both of you do for the pen community.

Mike Walker

Dear Sir,

You indicated on page three that the pen on your front cover are Aikin Lambert & Leroy Fairchild dip pens....however, a look with a loupe on the nib you will see it is a Edward Todd!!!! Not the others. Please I let me know if I am right. Thank you. By the way, it's a great issue.

John Mccloug

John-

Thanks for the kind words on the current *Pennant*. The pens on the cover are indeed Edward Todd and Leroy W. Fairchild.

I must confess you are the only person I am aware of who has resorted to reading *The Pennant* with a loupe; *Pennant* readers are a determined lot! Hopefully we won't drive you to pull out your loupe to read future issues of the magazine. On that topic, however, let me suggest that if you have some knowledge or interest in the area of dip pens (or loupes!) we are always looking for authors to write pieces for *The Pennant*...something to think about.

Thanks,

Tom Rehkopf, Associate Editor, The Pennant

The PENNANT



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ON THE COVER

Front cover. Parker 41, photo by Terry Clark.



Pen-Related Blog Sites

The list below is by no means comprehensive. Your own searching and visiting these blogs are likely to turn up many more choices. You'll find that many of these are intensely personal in their approach. Some bloggers may be simpatico with your outlook while others are just not "right" for you. And, as always, the Internet is a fluid and ever-changing place. Sites come and go. All of these sites were checked and current as of early November 2009. We only included blogs that showed a consistent updating and ones that had been recently updated as of our checking them out. And, yet, with all of that noted, you may still find some of these sites are not there when you go to check them out.



PENS, INKS AND WRITING INSTRUMENTS

The Dizzy Pen

dizzypen.livejournal.com

An Inkophile's Blog

inkophile.wordpress.com

Inks Nibs and Paper

inksnibspaper.wordpress.com

Inky Journal

inkyjournal.blogspot.com

The Pen Addict

www.penaddict.com

The Pen and Ink Journal

www.penandink-journal.com

The Pen Archives

penarchives.blogspot.com

A Penchant for Paper

apenchantforpaper.blogspot.com

Whatever

okami-whatever.blogspot.com
www.everydaycorrespondence.com

Every Day Should be a Red Letter Day

redletterdayzine.wordpress.com

Good Night Little Spoon

goodnightlittlespoon.blogspot.com

Letters and Journals

lettersandjournals.blogspot.com

Letter Writers Alliance

16sparrows.com/LWA/alliance.html

The Missive Maven

missivemaven.blogspot.com

We Love Snail Mail

welovesnailmail.webs.com

POSTCARDS

The Benevolent Postcard Society

benevolentpostcardsociety.blogspot.com

A Postcard a Day

apostcardaday.blogspot.com

PostMuse

postmuse.blogspot.com

Vintage Verve

www.cpaphilblog.com

MISCELLANEOUS

Office Supply Geek

officesupplygeek.com

Pentamento

pentamento.blogspot.com

Spiritual Evolution of the Bean

www.biffybeans.com



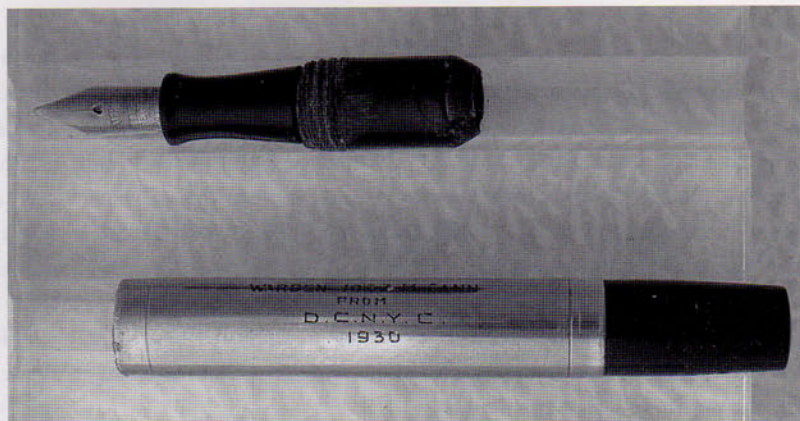
There are usually four major segments to any repair on a pen filling system: take the pen apart; check for damages; if necessary, look for or make part(s); and, finally, put the pen back together. These four distinct activities can apply to just about any mechanical device. A pen that opens up easily, with no damage to mechanical system such as lever filler, can have the sac replaced and be put back together in quick order. Over the years I see few of these pens since there are many folks in the pen community who can do this kind of work. When I do see one, it is likely to be a Wahl with the metal jacket inside the barrel or Coronets with crazing on the celluloid ink window. These are very hard pens to take apart, yet once apart, the rest of the repair is a simple sac job. Much of my time is spent on pens that are screwed together, and most of these turn out to be pistons.

A short thread on threads

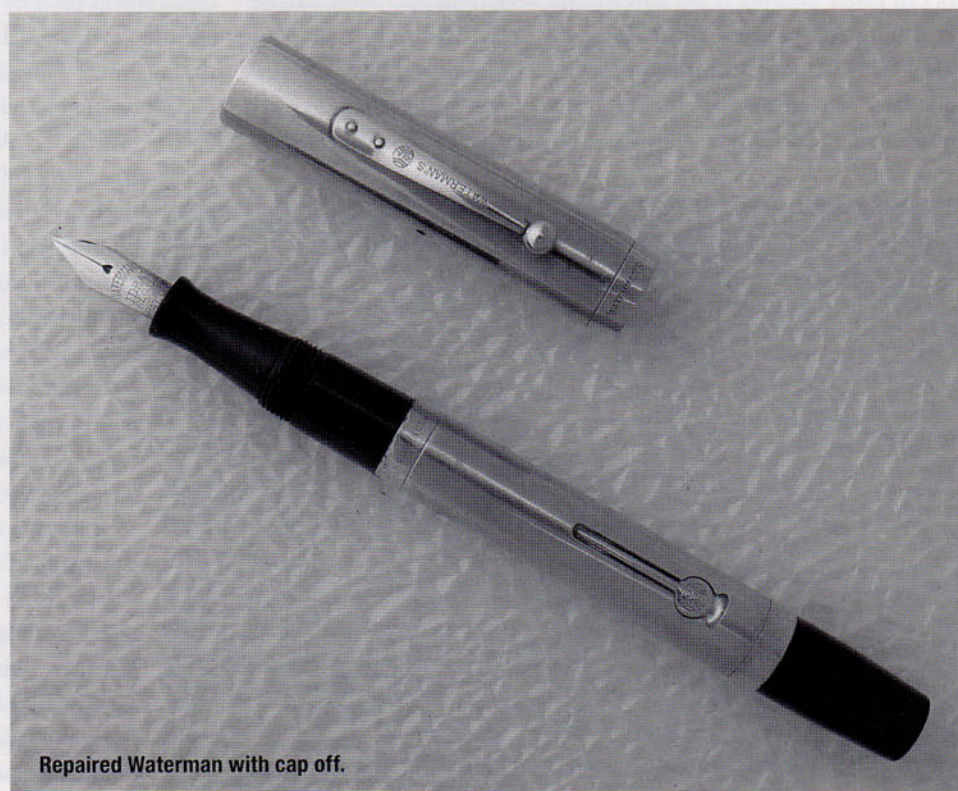
I happen to enjoy things that use threads to hold them together. Threads are such an elegant solution to hold parts together. It saddens me to think that we seem to be gradually moving away from the era of threads to one in which devices are snapped, riveted or clipped together, resisting efforts to take them apart without damage. For those who might be interested, there is a good read on the subject of screws by Witold Rybczynski entitled *One Good Turn: A Natural History of the Screwdriver and the Screw*.

In pens, the materials that are screwed together can make a difference on how well they unscrew. A hard-rubber section screwed on a celluloid barrel is a really good pairing because these materials don't interact with each other. The problem often lies in the sealant material such as shellac that crystallizes over 30-plus years. When applying heat, instead of softening the sealant and allowing the threads to unscrew, the crystallized dust particles don't soften, but, rather, clog the threads and will not allow them to release. It is unwise to directly heat the celluloid, because it tends to shrink with multiple applications of heat, making the threads even tighter. But heating of the section allows the threads inside the barrel to expand. Doing this a couple of times a day over 3–4 days will create a couple of tens of thousandths of an inch clearance and, thus, will allow the threads to come apart. Before doing this, be sure to flush out as much ink as possible from the barrel first because dried ink is a very good adhesive.

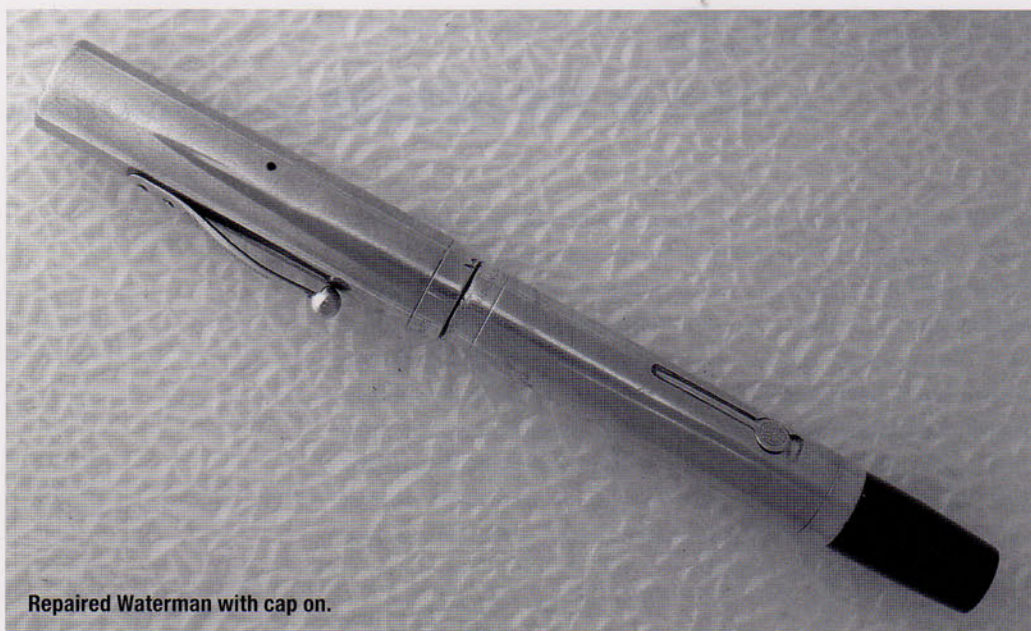
Hard rubber threads mated to hard rubber almost always come apart with heat. High



Waterman broken barrel.



Repaired Waterman with cap off.



Repaired Waterman with cap on.

heat and high torque can distort hard rubber and, if that starts to happen, stop and reheat the parts, which will return them to their original shape. Metal can mate well with celluloid, but it depends on whether the metal will corrode in the presence of moisture and oxygen. Aluminum can do that, as well as most steel. Brass and stainless steel can corrode, but it takes a long time and usually requires some mild acidic agent.

Whatever compound Parker used for their Vacumatic filler turns out to be moderately resistant to corrosion. A tight Parker filler usually means the celluloid has shrunk.

Metals mate well with acrylics, but acrylics mated with acrylics can cause binding if the threads are very tight and these can be hard to open up. Once those threads release, the parts spin right off. Metal-on-metal threads, other than aluminum, work very well together. The advantage of metal-on-metal threads is that a higher torque can be used to unscrew them—balanced by the disadvantage



Parker 360 with broken section.

that these threads can be tighter than non-metal ones.

There are countless ways in which to screw two parts together, such as using a reverse thread as seen in Pelikans and pens from several other makers, or using a different pitch and thread profile for waterproofing, but this is enough on threads for now.

Back to repairs

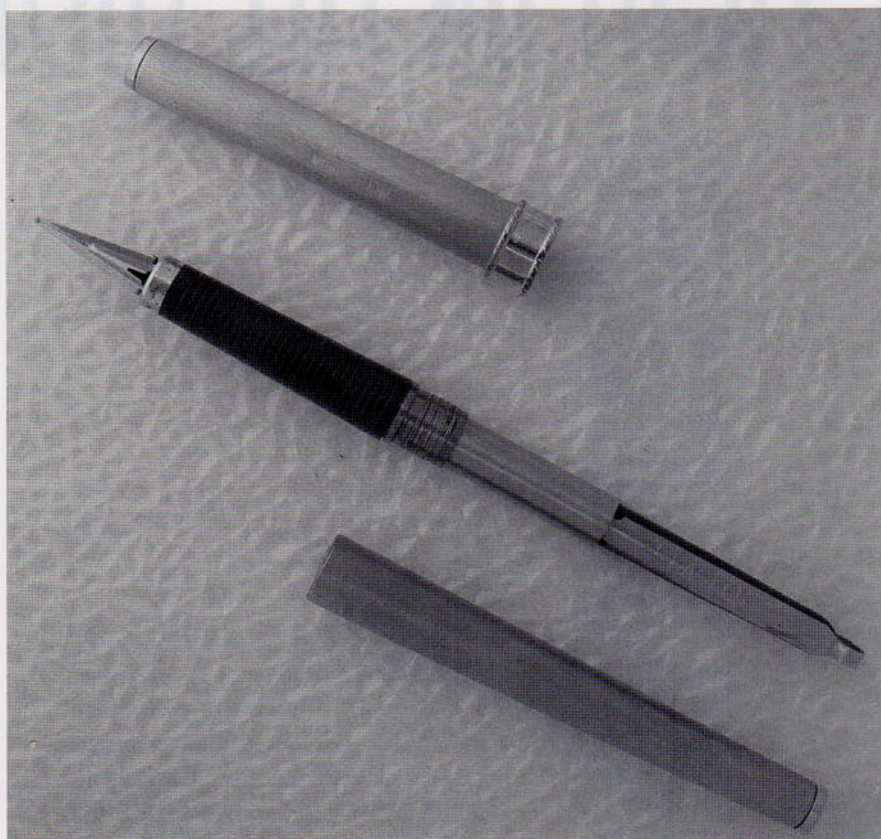
Returning to repairs, the next step is to check for damage. I group damage

into major and minor categories. The minor ones include cracks, chips, divots, burns, tooth marks, loose or tight threads and various distortions. In other words, other than some surface issues, the pen is inherently intact. Even though I call these minor damages, they can take time and skill to repair. Major damage means the pen is broken apart and the repair involves making or modifying parts to make the pen whole again. The accompanying photographs show some current examples of major damage repairs.

The first is a Waterman 0352, where the barrel is broken at the sleeve. I have several 52 barrels in the parts bins, most of them with the lever boxes taken out for repairs in other pens. I am going to make a lap joint (that's what they call them in woodworking) and slide a replacement piece of the donor barrel into the sleeved barrel. The lap joint looks like an "L" lying on its side and another "L" flipped over sliding into it. I use soft jaws on the lathe headstock to avoid marking the gold-plated barrel sleeve. I then use an inside cutter to make the bottom of the "L." A 5 mm cut is deep enough to hold the replacement part solidly in place. Then I measure the donor barrel

with an extra 5mm and then cut the upper part of the "L." The reason I cut in this order is because I want to see how much I am cutting off the donor barrel, rather than try a fine fitting while cutting inside the sleeved barrel. I fit the donor barrel segment on a drill bit of the appropriate size to give it both support and rigidity. Given the ample amount of surface to apply adhesive, I use 2-ton epoxy to join the two parts together. Finally the parts are clamped and left for a couple of days to allow the epoxy to cure.

The next example is a clipless Parker 360 that looks like the inside of the pen was solidly held together by dried ink. I don't think anyone reading this column would use regular pliers to twist the pen apart. But the owner of the pen did just that, twisting the barrel and section coupling out of the section and damaging both the barrel and cap, only to find the rest of the section firmly seated inside the cap. To make matters worse, pliers were used on the converter nipple to try

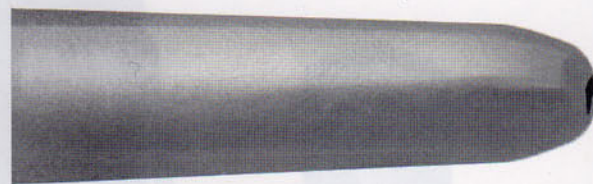


Repaired Parker 360.

and pull the rest of the section out of the cap. I soaked the cap for several days and once the ink got loose, the rest of the section came out. The pen looked like a basket case, but then, in checking out the parts, I realized that other than marks from pliers, the pen could be put back together with only a new nipple. I found a long nipple on a parts section, much quicker than making one out of hard rubber, drilled the damaged one out and glued the new one in. When the adhesive had cured, I glued in the section/barrel coupling and the pen looks ok for a user.

The last two examples pose different problems. The Parker "51" with stainless steel cap and barrel had a significant sized hole cause by crushing the end of the barrel almost head on—can't imagine what would cause that kind of damage. I used a round dapping tool to reform the end of the barrel but the problem now was how to fill the hole. I'm pretty sure that soldering is the way to go. There are a whole range of solders from acid or rosin core, to regular solder with different compositions of tin and lead, to silver and gold solder. I used medium or hard silver, but I don't have the flux for stainless steel. Flux cleans the soldering surface to allow the solder to adhere. The finished job is going to have to wait until I get the flux. I'm going to dome a thin piece of silver, tin (put a layer of solder on a surface) the inside top of the barrel and solder everything together with enough of a soldering layer to cover the hole, then clean up the barrel on the lathe.

Finally, I've included a photo showing a cut-away shot of the filler



Parker "51" damaged barrel end.



Montblanc 149 filler knob.

knob and piston spindle used in many Montblanc 149s. I thought some of you may want to see how this filler knob works. The reason this is a major damage is that without a filler knob/piston spindle the piston is not going to work. Over the years I've gotten damaged filler knobs with good spindles and broken spindles with good knobs. Getting out a good spindle from a damaged knob is easy: cut the knob in half and take out the spindle. Spindles are held in place in at least two ways: either a press fit collar as in the photo or a C-shaped spring that works like a collar. To get the spring out, I drill a small space next to the side of the spring with a dental tool and pry the spring out. For the collar, I use a flat end tap to cut threads, heat the knob and pull it out.

Sometimes it is easier said to reassemble in the reverse order of how it came apart than to actually do it. A lot of time can pass between disassembly and reassembly and I probably worked on a number of pens in between. Taking digital photos is a good idea, but I don't need to do that since I know how most pens fit together. With an unusual pen, what I do is to remember how a particularly difficult part disassembles, by looking at the whole part very carefully and partially refitting it several times to remember how it goes. The important thing is to never force a part in place out of frustration. Walk away and you'll be surprised how easy that job is an hour later.

Good luck with your pen repairs, and happy pen hunting.

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SHINING SOME LIGHT ON THE SOLAR

BY DENNIS BOWDEN

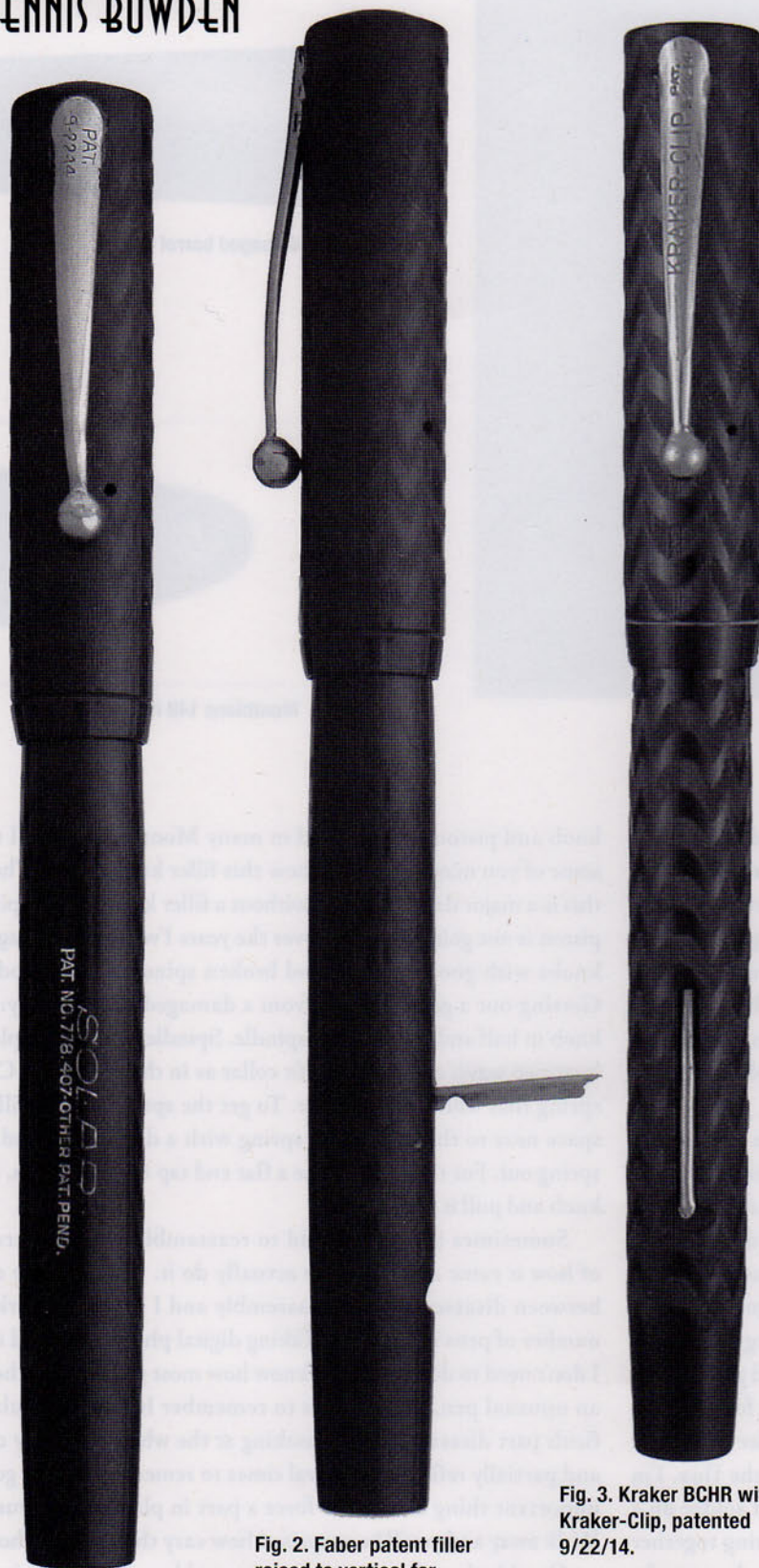


Fig. 1. Solar BCHR with Kraker patent clip.

Fig. 2. Faber patent filler raised to vertical for filling.

Fig. 3. Kraker BCHR with Kraker-Clip, patented 9/22/14.

AT FIRST GLANCE, A “SOLAR” MARKED pen would not attract any special attention, as it looks much like other black chased hard rubber lever filling pens made in the early years of the 20th Century. As I will show a bit later, in 1914 at least 6,230 “SOLAR” pens existed, but I have only encountered two examples over the past several years (Fig. 1).

When the pen in Fig. 1 appeared four years ago in an online forum discussion related to the Kraker Pen Co., I was very curious to learn more. I live in the Kansas City, Mo., metropolitan area and have been researching Kansas City’s home town pen company for several years. So, where did a “SOLAR” pen with a clip stamped with the Kraker Clip patent date come from? The imprint has no city or state identity and only shows a patent number, 778,407, issued to Charles. A. Faber of Toledo, Ohio, on Dec. 27, 1904.

The Faber patent was for the filler, a sort of integrated matchstick where the lever, when lifted to a vertical position, became the “matchstick” and was pressed straight down to depress the sac and fill the pen. An interesting feature, but one patented 10 years before and miles away from the Kraker Pen Co. (Fig. 2).

Next for investigation was the clip stamped with “PAT. 9-22-14”. On that date the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office issued Patent 1,111,501 to Albert Scheible and Patent 1,111,469 to George


PEN COMPANY OF KANSAS CITY

M. Kraker. Both patents were assigned to the Kraker Pen Co., Kansas City, Mo., a Missouri corporation. It is not possible for me to tell which of those two patents is the one cited on the clip, as they vary little and only by the internal means of attachment to the cap. For simplicity, I just refer to the 9-22-14 date as the Kraker Clip patent date. An example of a Kraker pen with the 9-22-14 Kraker Clip is shown in Fig. 3.

It was not until I obtained copies of the Articles of Incorporation of the Kraker Pen Co., filed September 25, 1914, from the Missouri Secretary of State that the connection between "SOLAR" pens and the Kraker Pen Co. was revealed (Fig. 4).

Three thousand six hundred and ninety "SOLAR" pens, valued at \$2,656.80, plus 2,540 more without nibs, valued at \$1,320.80, were part of one of the original incorporator's capital contribution to the new corporation, but which one? The most likely candidate would be J. (Joseph) A. Kraker, brother of George M. Kraker,

since neither of the other two original incorporators had a contribution of the value placed on the "SOLAR" pens. Joseph A. Kraker owned 79% of the Kraker Pen Co. at the time of incorporation and later testified, in the lawsuit that led to the demise of the Kraker Pen Co., that prior to incorporation, he was the sole proprietor of The Kraker Pen Co. He also testified that he had received pens, parts, furniture and accounts receivable from his brother George in repayment of a debt and it may well be that the "SOLAR" pens came from that lot.

The "SOLAR" pen mystery was only one of many surrounding the short life of the Kraker Pen Co., and others wait to be solved. By the way, if any readers know the location of any of the "PLANET" pens mentioned in the Kraker Articles of Incorporation, please contact me. 

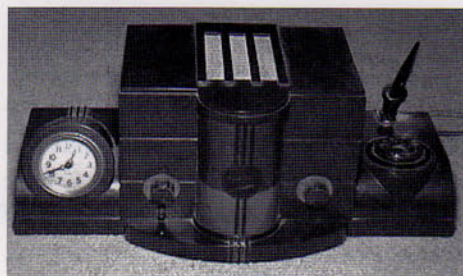
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Fig 4. Detail from Kraker Pen Co. Articles of Incorporation.

The following	
being an itemized description of said property located at No.	
324 Gibraltar Building, in Kansas City, Jackson County, Missouri,	
together with the cash value of each item;	
Furniture and Fixtures,	\$ 300.00
Dies, Machinery and Models,	1081.74
Merchandise, consisting of 1042 Planet pens, \$500.16; 3690 Solar Pens, \$2656.80; 2540 Solar pens without nibs, \$1320.80; and miscellaneous supplies, pens, pen parts and manufacturing material amounting to \$742.00;	5219.76
U. S. Patent on clip for fountain pen, issued September 22nd, 1914, (application Serial No. 836891),	2750.00
U. S. Patent on clip and process of fastening, issued September 22nd, 1914, (application Serial No. 844928),	2700.00
Miscellaneous,	
Accounts and Bills Receivable,	4485.10
Cash on hand and in bank,	643.56
	<u>5128.66</u>
Less miscellaneous liabilities assumed in part payment of above assets,	
Total,	<u>8180.16</u> 8948.56 \$16098.00

An Inkwell and a

by William J. Cowell Jr.



I had not paid much attention to inkwells. Of course I had seen Sengbusch inkwells as they are ubiquitous. It seems many antique shops and everyone who sells vintage pens has one or more for sale. So, I was not surprised when I found the pictured inkwell for sale in the antique/second-hand shop. What I found unusual was that the inkwell was different from other Sengbusch models I had seen—It is not glass. Further, it was cheap and so, as matter of curiosity, I bought it. As I like to learn about things I acquire, I figured I could check the internet on this one. This effort to seek information on the company and its products led me down some interesting paths. Thus begins the story.

I ENTERED SENGBUSCH IN MY COMPUTER AND BEGAN TO FIND BITS AND PIECES OF information. I learned that the proper name for the company is The Sengbusch Self-Closing Inkstand Company of Milwaukee, Wisconsin. I found a vast number of inkwells for sale and I found I was really going to have to dig to turn up what information I could. My pictured inkwell has the following information on the base: "Sengbusch; No. 48; Pt. No. 1949493; Made in USA". I entered the patent number in the Google patent search and found my inkwell. In the description, Gustav Sengbusch says that the patent "has particular reference to the construction of inkwells designed for mounting in school desks and for like purposes." Portions of this patent accompany this article. Susan Wirth advised that she had found about 20 patents for Sengbusch. These included improvements on his original invention, a dip pen with its own feed (Dip-A-Day), desk sets which were fed by an upturned ink bottle, the Handi-Pen and other desk sets which allowed the pen to set in ink. There is even a 1932 patent for an inkwell designed to fill fountain pens.

One of the first articles I found was written by Joanne K. Demski, in the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*. She obtained information from an unspecified 1929 newspaper article that noted Gustav J. Sengbusch was a bookkeeper at a Milwaukee wholesale house. One day in the early 1900's an inkstand was upset on a ledger page that had taken him hours to complete. As the result of this he decided to design an inkstand that could not be spilled. This was the start of the Sengbusch Self-Closing Inkstand Company. Sengbusch was the president and his wife, Hattie, was vice president. Susan Wirth advised that Sengbusch came from a family of bookkeepers and clerks, including his father. He understood the value of an inkwell that would not tip over and would allow one-hand access to the ink, as well as one that would prevent ink evaporation. The Sengbusch inkwell could also be used with both India and water-based ink. By 1929 the firm manufactured 23 different types of inkstands and employed about 50 people. In addition to inkstands, the firm made pens, lamps and radios at a plant located at 2222 W. Clybourn St. in Milwaukee. The plant closed in the late 1970s.

The next obvious place to check was the Society of Ink Well Collectors (www.soic.com). In their response, they indicated they had little more information than what I already had. They referred me to the Demski article, and also indicated that they had a number of company catalogs. None of the catalogs listed corporate information.

I had found a reference linking the Sengbusch Company to the Century of Progress (Chicago Worlds Fair) of 1933. In pursuing this, I came upon the University of Illinois Archives, Century of Progress Records. I learned that in *Series I: General Correspondence 1927-1937*, Box 47, Folder 1-13370, was a document on the Sengbusch Self-Closing Ink Stand Company. I contacted the University Library, University of Illinois at Chicago in search of this material. I received a response from Valerie Harris, Assistant Special Collections Librarian. She advised me that there were four pages of correspondence to a Mr. Scheaffer of the Sengbusch Company.

The first letter, dated July 17, 1931, and signed by a Mr. William Dawes, advises the Sengbusch Company that "the office equipment industry should be properly represented,

The Sengbusch Self-Clo

Mystery

and we cordially invite you to participate." Mr. Dawes then solicits information on their display requirements.

The next letter, dated Dec. 24, 1931, signed by a Mr. A.C. Martin, is a cover letter sending the Sengbusch company information on the office equipment pavilion. Some cost figures are included and the cost of two separate exhibit booths is \$1,000 and \$1,250 respectively. As a historical note, this was quite a sum in 1933.

Apparently the Sengbusch Company did not respond to these letters, because the next letter, dated Feb. 20, 1933, signed by E.S. Porter, reminds them that the fair is rapidly nearing completion but that "There are still a few desirable spaces left in choice locations."

The final letter, dated March 6, 1933, signed by W.S. McHenry, tells the company that there is some space available and offering the company space "for the display and sale of Mucilage Fountain and Bottle which was formerly under the name of the Fre-Flo Manufacturing Company."

We do not have copies of any correspondence from the Sengbusch Company to the Century of Progress. However, we do know that, at some point, the company answered positively. In a book entitled "Official Guidebook Of The Fair (1933)," p. 179, under the list of Fair Exhibitors in the building run by The Reynolds Exhibits Corporation, we find the Sengbusch Self Closing Inkstand Co.

Someplace in my research I had come across a piece of information that indicated that the Sengbusch Company had provided inkwells to the Supreme Court of the United States. Finding no other information on this, I wrote William K. Suter, MG US Army-Retired, Clerk of the Supreme Court, soliciting information. Emily Rosolowski, Curatorial Assistant, Office of the Curator responded:

"I can confirm for you that the Supreme Court did purchase Sengbusch inkstands for use on the Bench, on the Justices' individual desks, and in the Justices Conference Room; however we have no record of whether or not the Court held a contract with the company to purchase these or any other inkstands. I can also tell you that we have in our collection three Sengbusch inkwells that had been originally purchased for the Court, plus one vintage inkwell to replace an original that had gone missing in the early 1990's. The date for these inkwells is estimated to be in the early 1930's."

RADIO TODAY

51 Yearly Caldwell-Clements Inc., 480 Lexington Ave. New York City

What It Costs to Sell Radio at Retail
—shows that made profits average "expense ratios"
—lessons from failures

Check-List for Merchants
—look your business over
—see what your store needs

Fights and Radio
—effects on receiver sales
—tube and service pick-up

Sell Sets as "Furniture"
—feminine appeal of woods
—cabinetry and finish
—knowing "period stuff"

Servicing the New Lines

Merchandising "Sound"

Robinson-Patman Quandary

What the Manufacturers Offer

Oscillator Specifications

—At right: Analysis of 81 profitable radio businesses, showing percentages of sales receipts applicable to various expenses and to profit. See page 14.

AUGUST 1936

ADVERTISING	LT. HT. TAXES	MISC. EXP.	WAGES EMP'S	COST OF MERCHANDISE	OWNERS' SALARIES	RENT
2%	2%	6%	10%	44%	21%	4%

PROFIT, 11%

The Court still uses Sengbusch Inkwells. In a follow-up e-mail, Ms. Rosolowski told me that the Supreme Court also still has Sengbusch inkwells that are placed on the Bench for each Justice when the Court is in session.

Running out of places to look for information, I decided to contact the Milwaukee Public Museum. I received a quick response from Al Muchka, Associate Curator of American History. He checked the museum listings on small businesses in Milwaukee but could find nothing. He suggested I contact Steven Daily, Curator Research Collections, Milwaukee County Historical Society. Mr. Daily could find no information in the Society's holdings, but did provide the following information from Milwaukee City Directories:

1905 - Gustave J. Sengbusch first year listed selling inkstands out of his home 885 11th Street.

Opposite page: Airite Sengbusch radio.

Above: The August, 1936 issue of *Radio Today* had a feature on the Sengbusch Airite radio.

Sengbusch Inkstand Company

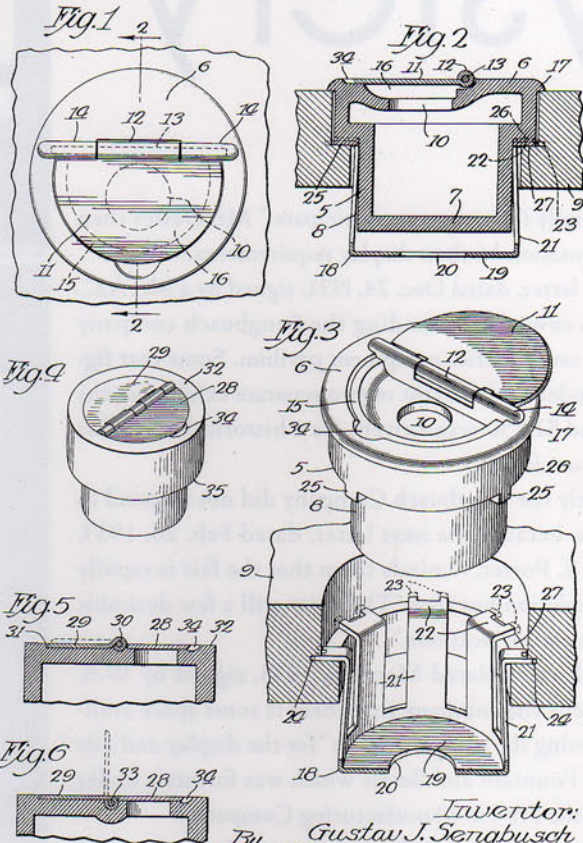
March 6, 1934.

G. J. SENGBUSCH

1,949,493

INKWELL

Filed April 17, 1933



Inventor:
Gustav J. Sengbusch
By Fisher, Cliff, Lane & Gills.

- 1906 - Sengbusch operated out of the Montgomery Building, Room 310-312 on Michigan Street, at southeast corner and Milwaukee Street.
- 1915 - Sengbusch had moved to the Stroh Building, 3rd Floor, 165 Michigan.
- 1926 - Sengbusch had moved to 2218 Clybourn Street.
- 1931 - Sengbusch listed at 2222 W. Clybourn Street (City renumbered streets).
- 1978 - Sengbusch moved to 7635 W. Blue Mound Road
- 1979 - Sengbusch listed for the last time at 7635 W. Blue Mound Road

Among other miscellaneous information I obtained was the fact that Sengbusch had produced radios. There is a real lack of information about this radio, the "Airite Sengbusch" but it is mentioned on p. 17 in the August 1936 edition of *Radio Today*, a trade publication for those in the radio business. The radio had a pen and inkwell on the right side, a clock on the left side and the radio occupied the center. Sengbusch also had a U.S. patent for a combined lamp and desk set. A copy of a drawing for a Canadian patent 319774, February 16, 1932, for a "Pen Support," also shows Sengbusch's inventiveness.

I had noticed that Dan Reppert, Librarian, Pen Collectors of America (PCA), had Sengbusch catalogs in the PCA Library. I obtained copies of these from him. The catalogs show inkstands of every shape and form: base sets for inkwells; a mucilage (glue) applier; the Ideal Sanitary Moistener (to moisten labels, envelopes, postage stamps,

Left: The Antique Shop Sengbusch inkwell, various views.

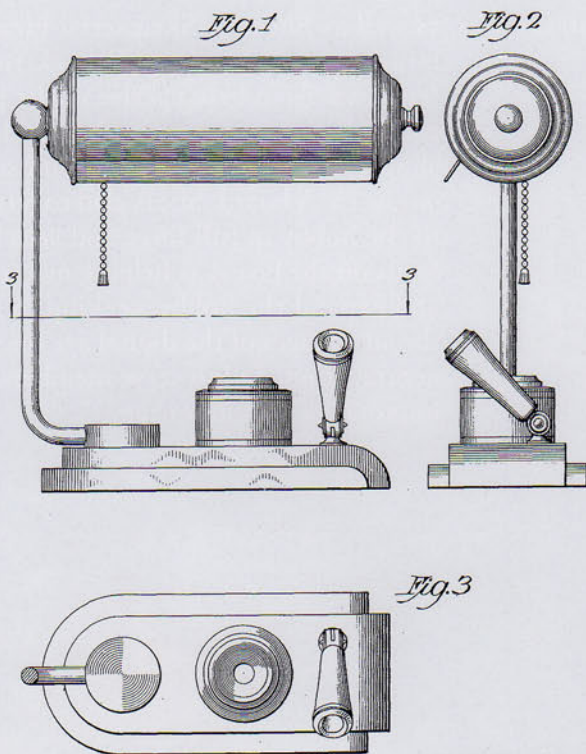
Above: Sengbusch's March 6, 1934 patent #1949493 for the school desk inkwell.

Opposite page, clock wise from top left: Sengbusch's 1937 U.S. patent for a combined lamp and desk set; page 17 of *Radio Today* showing Sengbusch Airite radio, lower left of page.

April 6, 1937.

G. J. SENGBUSCH
COMBINED LAMP AND DESK SET
Filed Oct. 5, 1936

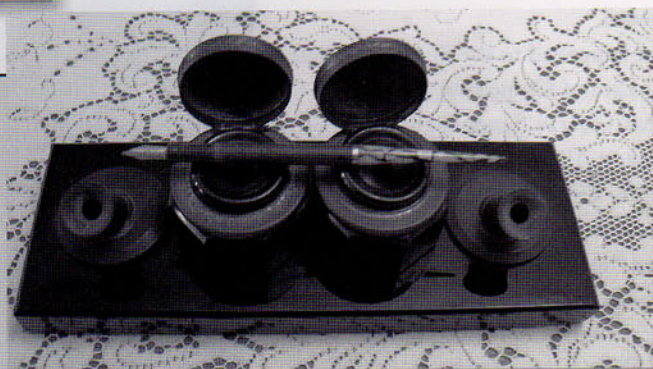
Des. 103,981



Inventor.
Gustav J. Sengbusch
By Fisher, Clapp, Sonner & Ford Attys

SENGBUSCH ON THE BENCH

Author William Cowell has documented in his research on Sengbusch the fact that Sengbusch inkwells are known to be present on the bench at the Supreme Court. Collector Harvey Raider has had just such an inkwell in his collection for over 15 years. It is thought to be identical to the model supplied to the Supreme Court Justices. "Both pens are original and authentic Sengbusch dippers," said Raider. "The pen with the pearl and black taper fits like it belongs. The other is not quite such a good fit. I keep looking, to no avail, for another with the pearl and black taper."



More novelties in radioclock design. Even the speakers find new positions—pointing upward or backward—in this (left) Alrite Sengbusch combined desk radio-clock-inkstand and model of Babette, and (right) Wilcox-Gay broadcast receiver.

August, 1936

50% Bass notes
30% High notes
How many radio tubes would you want in your next radio?
44% prefer 10 tubes
22% " 8 "
16% " 12 "
10% " 5 "
6% " 6 "
5% " 7 "

In your next radio set what additional features outside of regular side to listen to?
26% want Foreign broadcasts
24% " Complete around world
19% " Police
15% " Aircraft
8% " Amateur
8% " Weather
12% " Ship to Ship
In your next set which type of dial would you prefer? Airplane? Oval? Pop hole? Dial
55% Prefer Airplane Dial
33% " Pop hole Dial
12% " Oval Dial
In your next radio should the markings on the dial be large, medium or small?
55% prefer Medium Size Markings
43% " Large
2% " Small
In your next radio would you want a visual aid to tune in accurately?
88% Yes
12% No
In your next radio would an auxiliary pointer for more accurate tuning be desirable?
96% Yes
4% No
What do you think would be a fair price for the radio you have suggested?
Approximately 20% of those questioned indicated a preferred price. These ranged from \$15 to \$300. However, the most popular prices were:
\$751st
\$1002nd
\$503rd

RADIO DATES AHEAD

National Radio and Electrical Exposition, New York, Sept. 9-10
I.R.S.M. Convention, New York, Sept. 16-20
Schmieding-Bradstock Bout., Sept. 24
President Roosevelt at World Power Conference, Washington, D. C., Sept. 11

WE PLAY AGAIN

* Spectacular subshift in piano sales has been laid frankly and gratefully at radio's door. Sales are up the figures for 1935, say the musical trade since in recent letters to National Broadcasting Co. and Broad-casting is listed as "one of the major reasons."

More than once during the past decade the piano makers hit the dust to sweep the field. But the facts are that radio reached millions of new listeners, gave them a new interest in musical forms, moved them to purchase pianos. The piano is back and its growth is gradually catching up with other instruments; makes in their turn.

SOUND EFFECTS

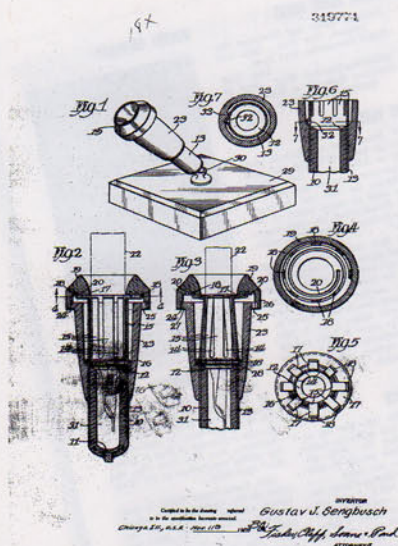
* Ray Kelley, who gets up artificial thunder and crackling horses and crackling fires for NBC, admits there are some sounds he cannot reproduce over the radio. Such as (chuckles George Clark) the clank of a hand's tail . . . or the through the eye. Ray! . . . or three of a kind beating two pairs . . . or ending up, quite appropriately, with holding one's tongue.

"VERITHIN" RECEIVER

* Slender, circular, pin-up radio set has been designed by Nathan George Horwitz, long-time devotee to the "flat" style trend in radio design. Engineers, Inc., New York City, and this innovation.


This disc-shaped model is dedicated to the contemporary tendency toward compact radios, to be suspended from walls, to be fitted into small corners, or to be built into walls. The trick design, as finally patented, will use 7 or more tubes, which are projected station call letters; kilocycle markings are out.

17



Sengbusch's 1932 Canadian patent for a "pen support."

etc.); Emeraline Desk Accessories, and the Kleradesk, an elaborate metal desk organizer in various configurations. Apparently one of the company's major success items was the Handi-Pen Desk Set. This was a combination dip pen and inkwell so designed that the tip of the pen nib was always in ink. The ink was provided from the inkwell by capillary action to the pen nib. An additional compartment was provided to "absorb barometric pressure". Thus the pen would write instantly when removed.

So what happened to the Sengbusch Self-Closing Inkstand Company? Susan Wirth advised that Gustav Sengbusch died sometime between 1947 and early 1950. His wife, Hattie, died in January 1974. Their son, Fred G. Sengbusch, ran the company until it was dissolved. Here we have a company that was in business for 74 years, well into the era when people had stopped using dip pens. Where are all the Handi-Pens, Emeraline Desk Accessories and No-Mar Rubber Base Sets? For that matter, where are the company records? Probably either destroyed or moldering forgotten in the back of some warehouse. Why is there such a dearth of information on this company? All these questions and more come to mind as I write this article. Perhaps some day, someone will discover more. Meanwhile, enjoy your Sengbusch inkstand and remember, "All is well—it's a Sengbusch." 

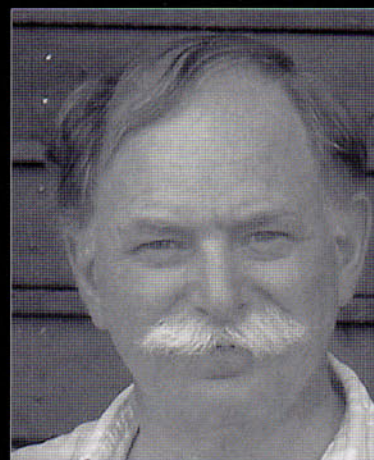
All rights reserved by the author.

New PCA Board Members

LISA HANES has been collecting fountain pens for more than 12 years, with a focus on Esterbrooks, as well as Sheaffer Skripserts. Health issues caused her to pull back for a few years from being active in the pen collecting community and attending shows. This will be Lisa's second stint on the PCA board. She is glad to return to the hobby in full force and sees her focus on the board as helping maintain and expand the hobby, seeking to use the advantages of the digital age for the organization, and to serve members by improving communication.



VANCE KOVEN is Senior Counsel at Comverse, a telecom industry company, and a composer of classical music (guess which of those pays the mortgage!). He has used fountain pens since childhood, but has been collecting for about ten years, mostly orange Parker Duofolds, brown Sheaffer Balances, Gehas, Morrisons and whatever else appeals. He lives in Boston, has one wife, three children, and one cat.



AARON SVABIK, who is also the new vice president, says his journey began quite innocently 14 years ago with an anniversary gift. That gesture led to an accumulation of fountain pens, and his tendency to be a tinkerer led him to establish Pentiques.com in January 2000. What began as a hobby slowly grew into an extremely rewarding career. In May 2006, he took Pentiques.com full-time. He says success lies in sound investment, which is why he seeks to educate and entertain with live streaming repair sessions and YouTube videos from pen shows and pen club events to attract new enthusiasts. As a board member, he says he will continue to invest in the existing community while cultivating a new generation of fountain pen lovers.



Handwriting

HANDWRITING'S HIDDEN FRIEND: THE COMPUTER by KATE GLADSTONE

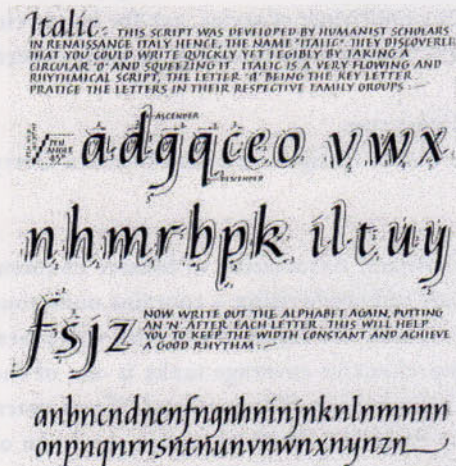
WE WHO LOVE PENS AND HANDWRITING OFTEN USE OUR HOBBY AS a time machine. The ink stains on our fingers, the rubber sacs and glass bottles on our repair benches—all transport us back to a time when writing a letter meant writing it by hand. Throughout the Pen Age—as I call the several millennia from the invention of papyrus to the invention of the keyboard—a letter or memorandum conveyed not merely its factual content, but also evidence of the writer's aesthetic taste, education, and manual skill (as shown by choice of ink, paper, pen nib, and handwriting style). To an aficionado of pens and handwriting, the transition from reading a fellow aficionado's "snail mail" to reading the day's mass of typographically uniform e-mails can feel like sensory deprivation.

It might seem reasonable, then, for pen folk to decry modern technology and to denounce computers and the Internet as foes of handwriting. After all, more and more school administrators and

teachers, in the U.S. and abroad, use the Cyber Age as a reason (or an excuse) to teach handwriting only minimally or not at all. However, the computer may be doing at least as much to improve handwriting as the computer (or any other technology) has ever done to degrade it.

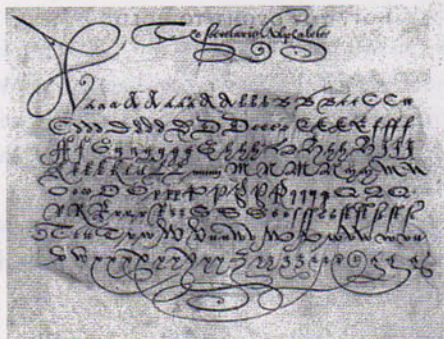
To prove this surprising claim, I shall share some of my own experiences and observations as a handwriting instruction and remediation specialist.

At least one in four of my clients tell me their interest in handwriting began when they looked at the font menus of their computers' word-processing programs. Daily exposure to a wealth of choice in letter styles—including many beautifully executed fonts that emulate historical styles of handwriting and calligraphy—has spurred many a computer user to wonder, in the words of a college student I taught, "whether the same attractive visual effects could



*This is a circa 1925 Waterman "Ideal"
Pen with an "Ideal" nib and Waterman
Havana Brown ink.*

That degree of abstraction he did not want to repeat, but nor did he want to go back to former ways of working. Instead, he devoted himself to creative imitations of bird songs, including a piano concerto in which the instruments form a dawn chorus, another piano concerto with an ensemble of wind and percussion enunciating the brilliant and raucous calls of tropical species.



This is an example of my normal, everyday handwriting - I suppose it's a sort-of distorted italic. This was written at my usual letter-writing speed. So there you have it - my handwriting for better or for worse.

possibly be produced by hand." (Call this the "back-door route" to an interest in handwriting improvement; rather as if someone began taking a daily walk in order to discover whether the human body could move from place to place without a car!)

Ever since the Internet became publicly accessible, websites devoted to handwriting styles and handwriting improvement have constituted one of the categories of sought-out websites. Ten years ago, it was very difficult to find handwriting instruction online. Within the past five years, it has steadily become easier and easier to find such sites, as much because of their increasing number as because of any improvement in search engines. Further, more and more of the recently established sites include increasingly substantial bodies of handwriting instruction, presentations of letter examples, discussions of the pros and cons of various writing techniques, pens, pen positions, and so on. (For my own selection of some of the 'Net's best handwriting instruction and examples see the site list at the end of this article.)

High-tech homes for handwriting now include the blogosphere. The Internet now offers literally tens of thousands of "handwriting blogs", composed partly or wholly in the blogger's own handwriting (scanned and posted as graphics). Much of the handwriting is beautiful; almost all of it is at least legible. (No blogger wants readers asking "What did you write?").

Five minutes of searching Google for images of handwriting (or images of any particular handwriting style) will yield more images of fine handwriting, from more sources, than people living before the Internet could have hoped to locate (or even to learn about) in days, weeks, or even months of pre-Internet research through libraries, art collections, calligraphy exhibitions, or other non-electronic sources. For some of the available wealth, the accompanying photo shows five splendid examples which popped up in the first five seconds of my Google Image search on the term "handwriting".

Even our mobile phones now provide Cyber Age opportunities for handwriting improvement. Apple's iPhone Store, for instance, currently offers 23 handwriting instruction applications (including applications for Japanese and Chinese calligraphy), along with 19 additional applications which allow taking handwritten notes, and even sending handwritten messages, via their mobile phones. (A forthcoming iPhone application—slated for a November release—will teach Italic handwriting via the iPhone. The designer of that application has an ad in the current issue of *The Pennant*!)

So, the next time you hear people say that computers have extinguished handwriting, show them this article and direct them to the following web-sites for electronically connected scribes:

Handwriting on the Net: Resources listed by website:

- quilljar.users.btopenworld.com/handw.html
- The website of Christopher Jarman, a UK handwriting instructor whose excellent textbooks have gained wide use in the British Commonwealth. Valuable downloads here include Jarman's chart

of "Twelve Rules for Good Handwriting," applicable to any style.
tinyURL.com/BriemHandwritingRepair

- Downloadable multimedia presentation of ten steps to improve handwriting – created by Gunnlaugur Briem, the designer of Iceland's national handwriting curriculum.

tinyURL.com/LaOperina

- Downloadable reprint of a Renaissance-era handwriting manual that continues to inspire handwriters of today

BFHhandwriting.com

The website of Nan Barchowsky. Materials and downloads available here, or linked from here, include much Italic information as well as information useful to those seeking to improve their performance of non-Italic handwriting styles.

clubtype.co.uk

- For the font-minded: handwriting resources and downloads available here include a set of fonts specifically designed for use as customizable handwriting models accommodating various stylistic preferences. Purchasers of the font set also receive a free e-book by UK handwriting specialist Rosemary Sassoon of tips and hints for teaching and practicing handwriting.

fountainpennetwork.com/forum/index.php?showforum=12

- The Fountain Pen Network's Penmanship Forum. Here, pen-dom's masters and not-yet-masters of handwriting post their handwriting samples in a multitude of styles, ask for handwriting improvement advice, and provide feedback on each others' efforts.

www.handwritingsuccess.com

- The website of Italic handwriting instructors Barbara Getty and Inga Dubay.

iampeth.com

- Website of the International Association of Master Penmen, Engrossers, and Teachers of Handwriting – contains numerous lessons and exemplars, mostly for styles of the past 400 years. Its excellence and comprehensive coverage make it one of the few non-Italic handwriting websites I recommend. If you yearn to write like a Founding Father (or Mother), to pen the script of a Gilded Age merchant or socialite, or to loop and swirl like an early twentieth century Palmer Method virtuoso – visit this site.


italic-handwriting.org

- The website of the Society for Italic Handwriting. Free materials here include PDFs of recent issues of the Society's quarterly journal, *Writing Matters*, along with a wealth of handwriting samples by skillful Italic handwriters past and present.

jp29.org

- James Pickering, expert on pens and penmanship history, teaches a formal Renaissance Italic hand online. The site includes a profusely illustrated blog.

monkeysee.com/swansbury

Nan Barchowsky's free online series of handwriting improvement videos. 

All rights reserved by the author.

SPIN CYCLE



Homemade Ink Slinger Removes **Inky** Remnants

by Ron Zorn

IF YOU CHANGE INK, OR CHANGE YOUR PEN AS FREQUENTLY as I do, the question of how to get ink out of a pen is not insignificant. I have a patient and loving wife—and it's a good thing that I do! For years our kitchen curtains had blue freckles on them, a reflection of my taste for permanent blue/black ink, and frequent pen changes. The situation was exacerbated when I started taking in pens for repair. Now, while I can't guarantee that this little gizmo will save your marriage, I can testify that it can aid in maintaining a degree of domestic tranquility.

Credit for the initial idea for the salad spinner centrifuge goes to the repair guys on the West Coast. A number of years ago I

read a thread somewhere online where they tried a salad spinner to spin ink out of pens, but they used a piece of PVC pipe, with paper towels stuffed in the ends. I wrote it off as too cumbersome, and moved on. Too much bother. But then someone had a Parker Whirlclean on eBay. I had always assumed that the Whirlclean was motorized, but the pictures showed that it was hand cranked. The wheels started to turn, and the subject of this article was born.

The idea of the salad spinner centrifuge is simple—mount something to hold your pen in a basket, put the pen in the holder, close the lid, crank, and pull all of the ink out of your pen. Because the basket spins at a ratio of about

More >>> 22

PCA Forges Partners National Postal Muse

By Kim Svabik



A chance meeting at the Washington, D.C., Pen Show has led to a new partnership between the Pen Collectors of America and one of the nation's leading museums for the preservation of the history of written communications, namely the Smithsonian National Postal Museum.

The 75,000-square-foot National Postal Museum, a part of the Smithsonian Institution, is on the lower level of the historic City Post Office Building nestled between the Capitol and the distinctive Beaux-Arts style Union Station in the Northeast quadrant of Washington, D.C. The PCA will co-host a Family Festival during National Letter Writing Month on May 29, 2010 (Memorial Day weekend).

As part of this inaugural event partnering the Postal Museum and the PCA, members of the PCA will join museum volunteers and staff to educate and give museum visitors an unusual educational experience. The Postal Museum atrium will feature activities including handwriting demonstrations, Pens For Kids workshops, understanding the history of filling systems, contemporary pen design, engineer-

ing of fountain pens filling systems, *Pennant* giveaways and, in culmination, visitors will

link to the museum's historical exhibits through a period Scavenger Hunt. The scavenger hunt will add the story of pens in America to the exhibitions, which focus on postal history and philately (stamp collecting).

Since 1993 the Postal Museum has told the story of postal and philatelic history. It is dedicated to the preservation, study, and presentation of postal history and philately, showcasing more than 5.9 million objects in its collection. With the event next May, the PCA will join the Smithsonian's Secretary's mission to "Inspire Generations through Knowledge and Discovery." Erin M. Blasco, Public Programs Coordinator for the museum notes that adherence to high standards is critical when the Institution considers an organization or fellow museum to join them in a public program expe-

Top: Delivering Hope logo. Right, top: logo of National Postal Museum; Small canvas, big message—Yellowstone National Park; bottom, atrium of the National Postal Museum.



Ship with um



Smithsonian
National Postal Museum



BENJAMIN
FRANKLIN
FOUNDED THE FIRST
PUBLIC LIBRARY IN
PHILADELPHIA
AND THE FIRST
POST OFFICE IN
THE UNITED STATES
IN 1775



rience. The PCA joins the list of organizations that have partnered with the museum to present high quality education programs, including the US Postal Service and the American Philatelic Society.

How the partnership began

A discussion at the PCA Booth during the D.C. Pen Show began with a chance meeting with Postal Museum docent and pen collector, Tadas Osmolskis. During a family program about Victory Mail, Osmolskis decided to bring in some pens from the WWII era that could have been used to write V-Mail. He also brought in vintage ink that was marketed specifically for V-Mail use. The "Write Your Own V-Mail" station at the program came to life with the addition of historic pens. Grandparents shared memories, kids experienced a new sense of importance to their correspondence and, through it all, Osmolskis was there to explain how the pens worked and changed over time. It was a perfect example of how he and the other volunteers and staff members at the Postal Museum are keepers of decades of stories that are represented by



Left: Airplane display in the National Postal Museum atrium.
Right: V-Mail postcard.

the exhibits throughout the museum. As is typical for the Smithsonian, exhibits are presented in a thought-provoking manner that goes beyond old papers and artifacts. Like a good letter, the exhibits in the museum tell stories.

There are, of course, larger than life exhibits of mail carrying vehicles of all sorts and ages. In the atrium, above the exhibits and visitors below, all, hang three planes suspended flight above the rafters. Below that, is a more earthbound exhibit of a horse with a red stagecoach pausing on its route while a nearby Railway Post Office car allows for hands-on exploration and a nearby Alaskan dogsled is filled with mailbags for distant villages and settlements. All so real you can almost hear the clomping of hooves and whirling propellers. Exhibit rooms are filled with Victory Mail from WWII, letters Amelia Earhart carried across nations and oceans, railroad postal carriers with their beloved canine mascot, Pony Express riders, and priceless philatelic collections—including hand-drawn Depression-era stamp designs from President Franklin D. Roosevelt. Guarding it all is, of course, the watchful bi-focaled eyes of Benjamin Franklin, a colonial-era postmaster and life-long proponent of an efficient postal system in the colonies and, eventually, the new nation.

As pen collectors well know, any communication that ends with a stamp often features a pen, ink and stationery. Once the stamp is placed on the envelope, a tale begins as the words leave the hands of their writer and venture to the eyes of their recipient. The opportunity to join in and enrich the story told by the Smithsonian Postal Museum is both an honor and a privilege that the board of the PCA believes will encourage our members with the promise we are making fountain pen history, their use, and collecting enjoyment relevant to new audiences and younger generations. ✍

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Spinner, from >>> 17

4:1 over the speed of the crank, it gets going quite fast. Centripetal force will very quickly pull all of the ink out of any pen, including a Parker 61.

The centrifuge pulls ALL of the liquid out pens with internal collectors like a "51," 61, or the Sheaffer Imperial and Targa lines. If you want them to be really clean, flush them with water, spin the pens, flush and spin again.

How to make your own

Parts needed:

1 salad spinner

1 long tapered plastic funnel from Wal Mart

2 tie wraps

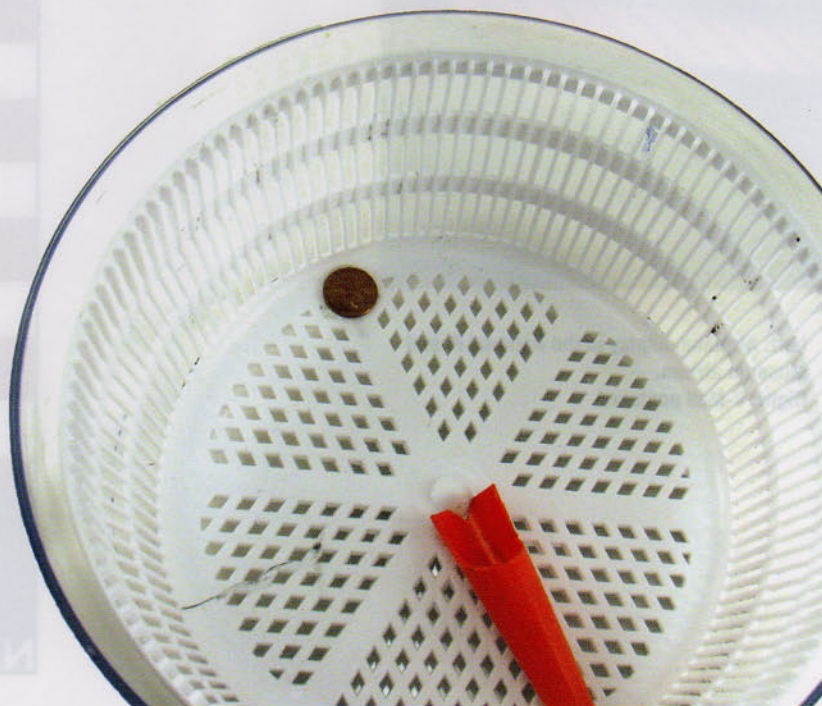
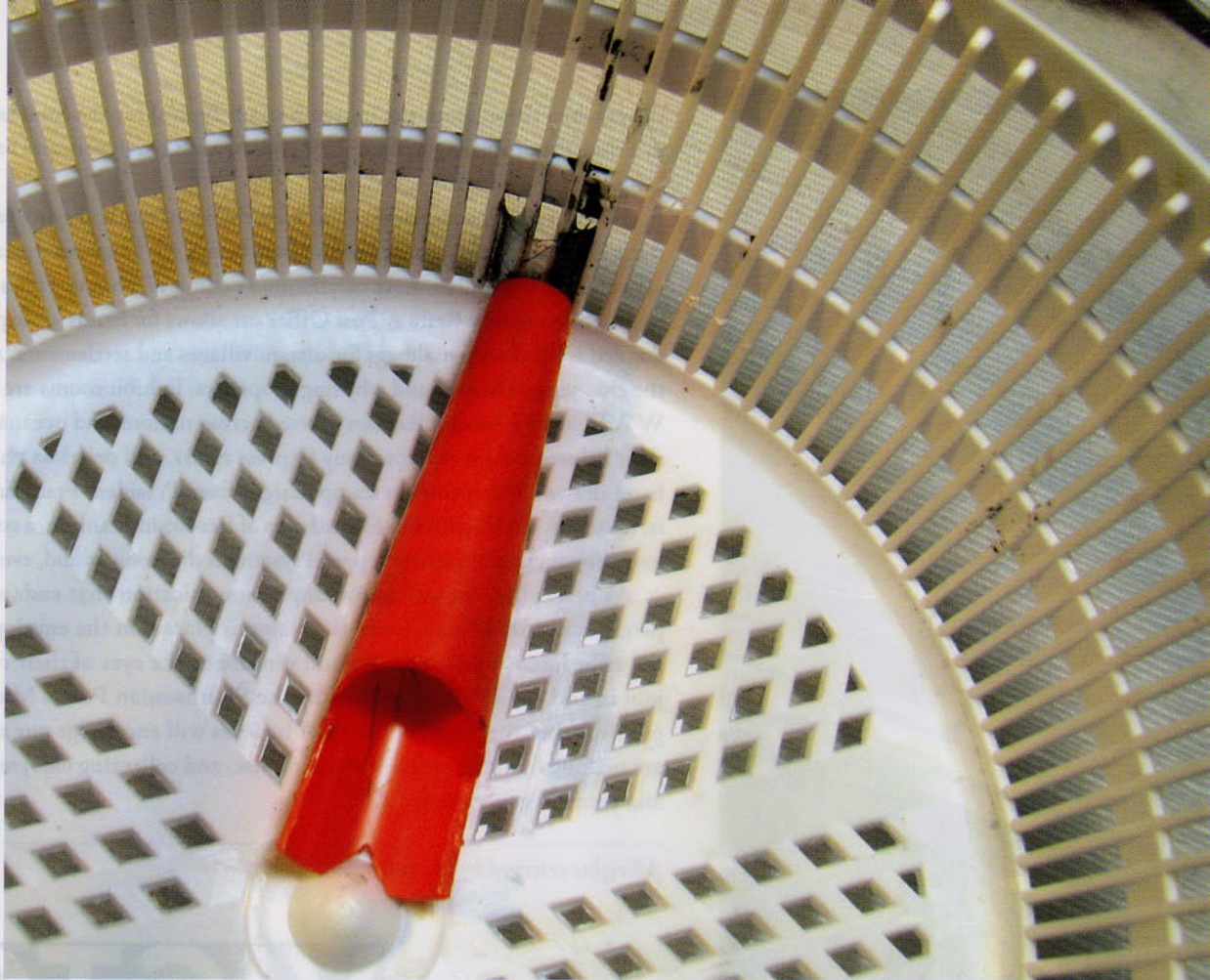
A hot glue gun is helpful

Total cost: under \$15.

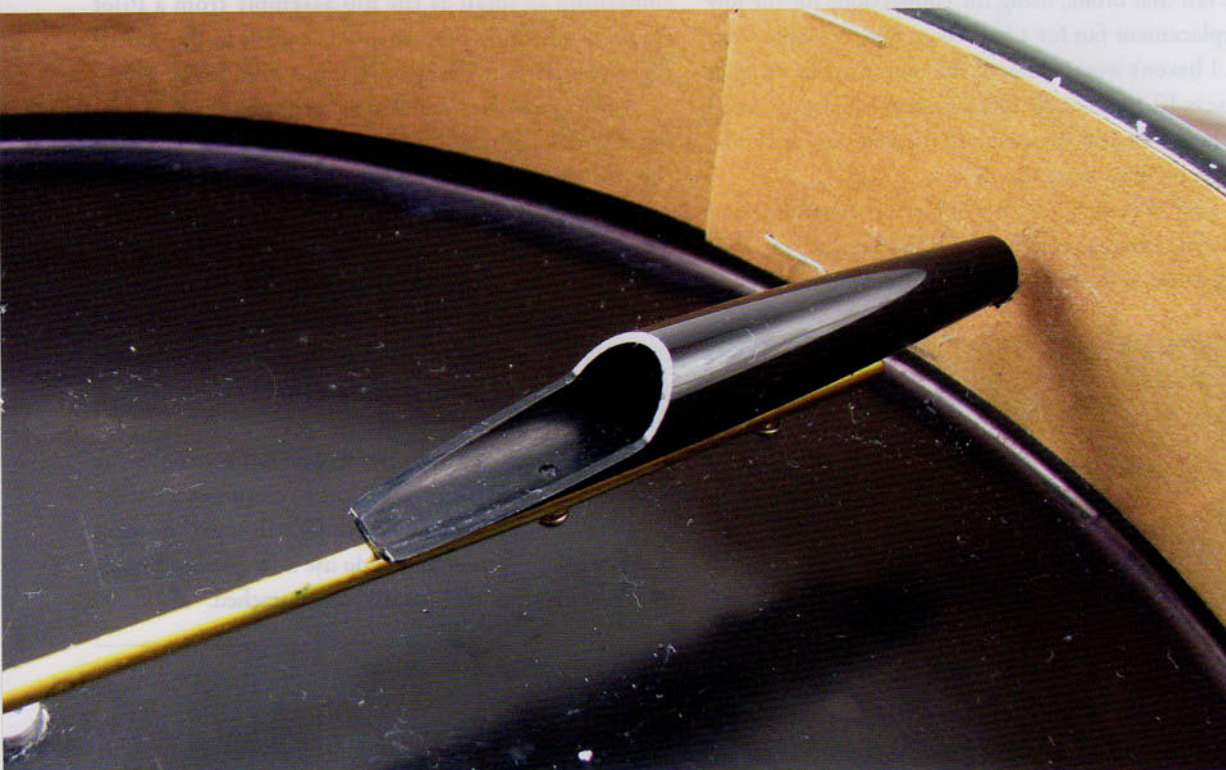
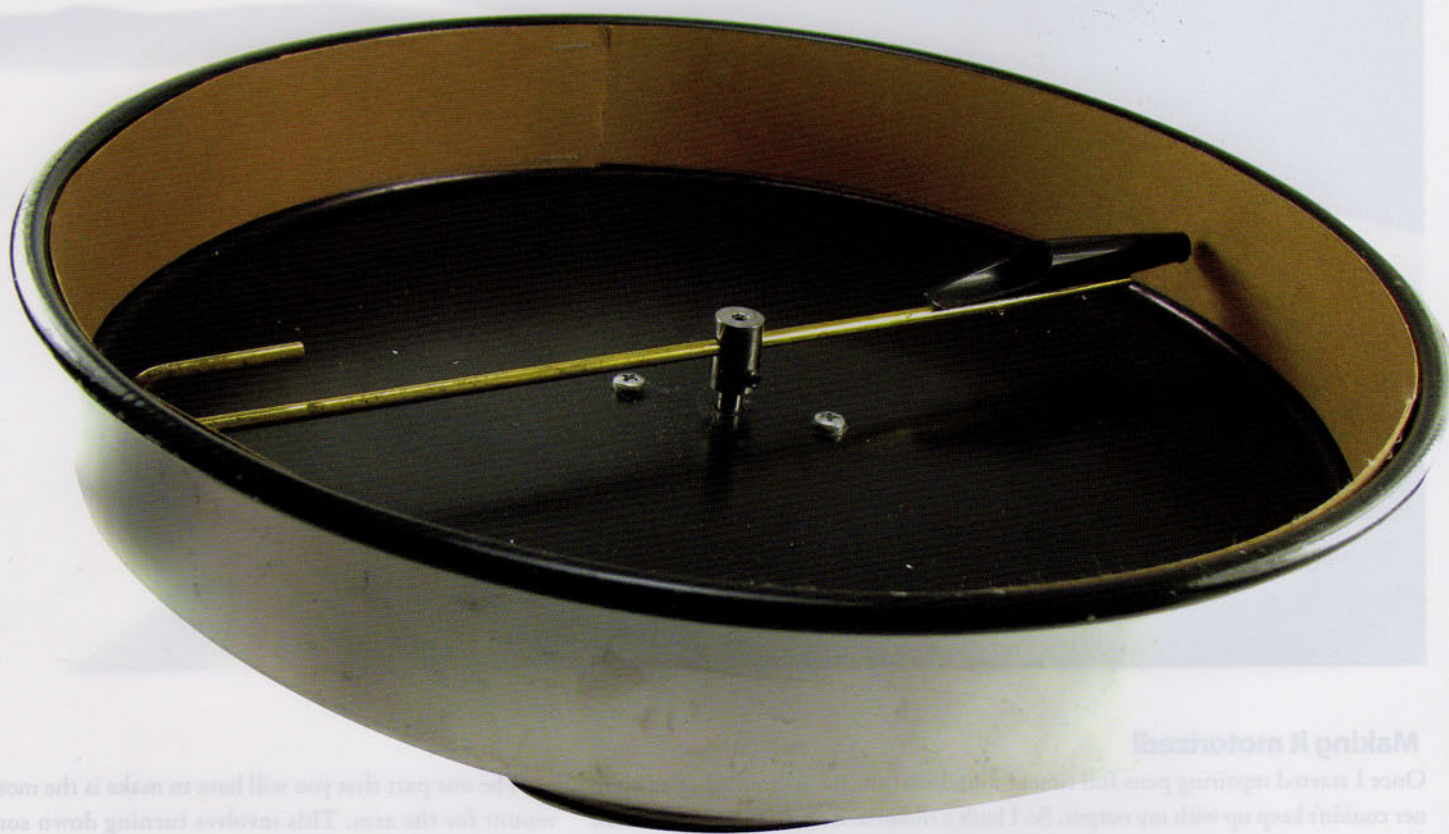
Buy a salad spinner that's as big as you can get. My first one is nearly 12 inches in diameter. The second, shown in these photos, is about 10 inches. Buy one that has a knob on the lid to spin the basket, not one with the mechanism that goes down the middle of the basket. It'll get in the way. Your funnel can be found in the automotive department at Wal Mart for about \$2.

Cut the funnel length so that it runs from the edge of the spinner basket to about the middle. I notched mine at the top so that I can grab a short pen or section more easily. Smooth the edges with a little sandpaper, or use a lighter to

melt the edge of the plastic just a bit. I used a hot glue gun to glue the pen holder in the basket, and then wire ties (aka tie wraps) just for added security. I'm a pessimist, and don't want the pen to go flying because the holder broke loose.

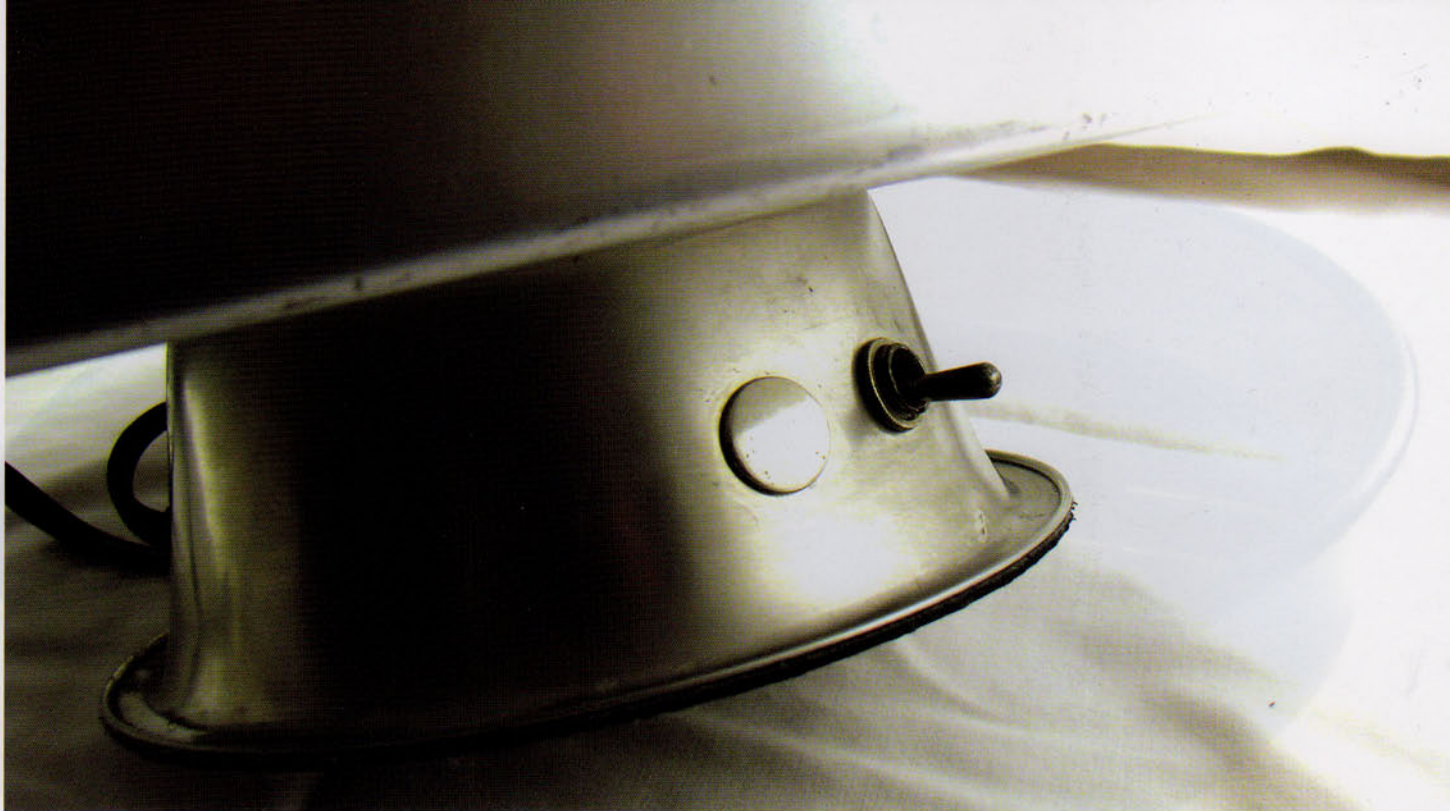


Above: Salad spinner basket close-up showing acetate woven through ribs. Right: Salad spinner basket with pen holder.



**Top, Motorized spinner;
bottom, motorized pen
holder.**

Opposite page: top, motor base; bottom, motor mount.

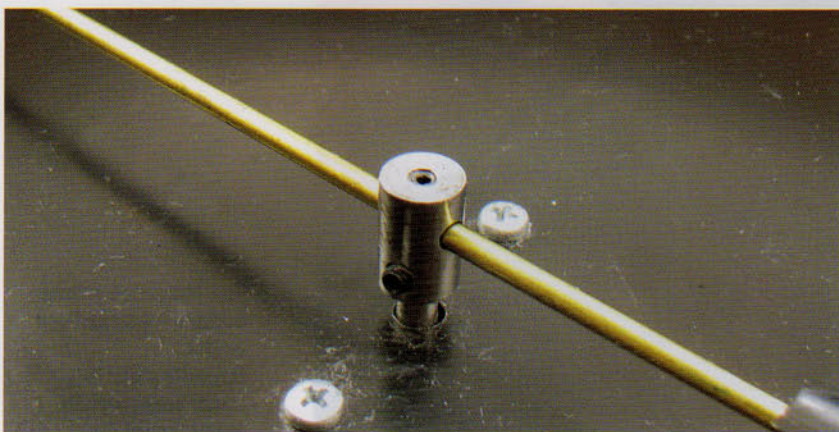


Making it motorized!

Once I started repairing pens full time, I found that the hand cranked salad spinner couldn't keep up with my output. So I built a motorized centrifuge, based on the design of one sold by Parker that's now on the bench of Richard Binder.

The motorized centrifuge is also relatively inexpensive to make, but requires a bit of lathe work. The centrifuge pan itself is a 12-inch cake pan from a craft store and the base is a stainless steel dog food bowl from the dollar store. I salvaged a power cord from some discarded piece of equipment or a lamp; the switch and brass rod came from the hardware store. The pen holder is a "51"/21 desk set trumpet, the same as the one on the original Parker centrifuge. The motor came from a small 8-inch table fan that broke, using the connections for the low speed setting. You can use a replacement fan for a bathroom fan, available from an appliance parts distributor. I haven't worried about the motor overheating at all, because the average run time is 10-15 seconds. Blotter paper is placed around the perimeter of the pan to catch the ink as it comes out of the pen. Yes, Virginia, you can still buy blotter paper at a big-box office supply store.


You may have to improvise a bit to come up with a holder for the motorized version. Just make sure that the end is either small enough to stop a nib (as with the "51" trumpet) or make a stop to keep the nib from flying out the end.



The one part that you will have to make is the motor mount for the arm. This involves turning down some steel rod stock, and then drilling it to accept the motor shaft, the rod, and two holes sized and tapped to accept set screws to lock the parts in position.

There are advantages to both designs. Obviously the low cost of the salad spinner centrifuge is an advantage. With its relatively large pen holder, you can clean out pens as big as a PFM or Sheaffer Legacy, but also something as small as the nib assembly from a Pilot Capless. The only pens that won't work in the centrifuge are especially heavy ones, like a Montblanc 149.

Nothing extra is needed to hold the pen or nib assembly regardless of size. The side walls of the holder secure the pen against the rotational forces, and the piece of plastic, whether a wide rib itself or a piece of plastic woven into the ribs of the basket in front of the holder, stops the nib or pen from going through the outside of the basket. Centripetal force will hold it in place, and the force applied to the tip of the nib as it spins is far less than that exerted when you write, so it's not something about which to be concerned.

The only drawback to the motorized version is the size of the holder. You can't use it to clean out a Parker Duofold Sr. or a PFM. They just don't fit into the socket deeply enough to be secure. I do use it to spin out Legacy nib assemblies, but without the barrel attached. 

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THE 2009 D.C. PEN SHOW

Going to the Supershow

by Richard Jarvis ... Photos by Janet Wright

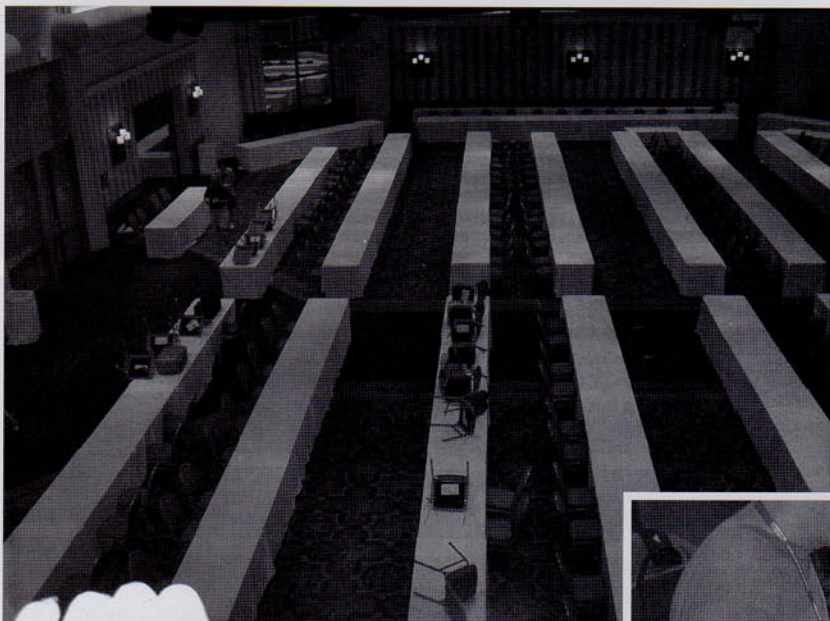


Suburban Washington was getting a beautiful preview of fall in August as the D.C. Pen Show came to town and the gorgeous weather brought out heavy crowds for the Saturday portion of the show. As is usually the case, the Sheraton in Tyson's Corner had extra help outside to direct traffic and assist pen seekers in successfully negotiating their first quest of the day—finding a parking spot!

The D.C. Supershow remains the largest show in terms of attendance with Saturday crowds always creating a lot of jostling in the aisles. As always, Sunday's show is a little slower paced with not quite as many people in the rooms. The trading and pen talk-

ing began much earlier in the week, though, with some enthusiasts arriving as early as Wednesday and many coming into town on Thursday. Friday was a busy day for trading and pen talk.

Many manufacturers had displays at the show and were kept active talking about their pens throughout the weekend. Delta, Monteverde and Yafa occupied their usual spot near the front of the lobby while other manufacturers were scattered in the area leading into the two connected ballrooms that always host the show. Diplomat was one of the manufacturers in that row and the representatives at the table noted the company has returned to the U.S. market with lots of new models. Sailor, as always, was well



represented at the show with an extensive display.

Inside the main rooms was a wide assortment of vintage pens of all kinds. The Washington Supershow is always a magnet for international collectors and dealers and this year was no exception—despite some drop off from the economic crunch. Each year the show seems to bring more choices in international vintage pens with pens from the U.K., Germany and Italy well represented on tables throughout the room.



The D.C. show also featured a number of new old stock Sheaffers on a table staffed by Jim Rouse as well as a good selection at other tables, such as Dan Reppert's. It seems the closing of the Sheaffer Fort Madison facility has had the effect of putting many more Sheaffers from the 1970s through the





1990s onto the market as old stocks of parts and miscellaneous inventory were cleared out.

Another busy spot at this year's show was the PCA table where Kim Svabik was juggling the duties of signing up new members and helping kids participate in the Pens for Kids program. All in all, DC once again proved to be a great pen experience for collectors both young and old. 🖋️

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FROM THE **PRESIDENT**

A LIBRARY WITH NO BOOKS?

OKAY, NOW I'M REALLY STEAMED UP. HAVE YOU HEARD THIS ONE? COURTESY OF THE Sept. 4, 2009 edition of the *Boston Globe*:

"Officials at Cushing Academy, a prep school in Ashburnham about 90 minutes west of Boston, are parting ways with their 20,000-volume library, but not with its contents. The school's new "learning center" will have no books—they have been donated or discarded—but can all be accessed at computer kiosks where some of the book library was.

"Instead of a library, the academy is spending nearly \$500,000 to create a "learning center," though that is only one of the names in contention for the new space. In place of the stacks, they are spending \$42,000 on three large flat-screen TVs that will project data from the Internet and \$20,000 on special laptop-friendly study carrels. Where the reference desk was, they are building a \$50,000 coffee shop that will include a \$12,000 cappuccino machine."

And I thought I was hopeless before. I like fountain pens; I use a crank can opener. I don't have a cell phone. *But a library with no books?* I'm sorry, that's just going a bit too far for me. Where's the Wayback Machine, Mr. Peabody?

As a matter of fact, the PCA Board of Directors is wrestling right now over a related matter. The magazine you are holding in your hands is the single most expensive item in the PCA budget. It requires a tremendous amount of work, not only to write and edit (thank goodness for our thoughtful and dedicated authors and editors), but also to produce, publish, and mail to you. Would our audience be better served with an electronic only version of this magazine? We are in the process of putting that information on the web, but maybe that should be the only medium? For the moment, we have decided to stay with this exact format, believing that there is something intrinsically and extrinsically wonderful about an object that delivers content in the hand and that can be referred to ... without access to a computer screen. Your comments are welcome on this matter. Now, I'm off to turn the crank on my Model-T.

Carla Mortensen



[Editor's note: Please share your thoughts with us on Carla's musings here. Should The Pennant go paperless? Why? Why not? This is the decision all of publishing is facing and we at the PCA are not immune to the forces that are squeezing all publishers—paper costs, printing costs and ever-rising mailing costs. But we are also beholden to you, our members. So, please write a letter to us with your thoughts. You can turn the crank like Carla and mail it to Richard Jarvis, Managing Editor, The Pennant, 1280 Parkmont Drive, Roswell, GA 30076 or, for you modern types, send it to wordherder62@gmail.com.]

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Check out a local pen club. Not listed here? Email your club information including contact name, email and phone number to: info@pencollectors.com

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rroewert1@tampabay.rr.com
Ph: 727.743.8890

PCA INCOME STATEMENT

Ordinary Income/Expense

Income	
Member Dues	\$19,882
Advertising	8,992
Donations	250
Total Income	29,123

Cost of Goods Sold

Pennant	18,879
Membership Expense	3,421
Show Table	2,437
Editor Expenses	1,900
Library Copies	934
Pens For Kids	243
Total COGS	27,816
Gross Profit	1,308

Expense

Website Maintenance	13,230
Member Pins	1,642
Postage	1,174
Board Development	1,091
Corporate/Insurance	1,067
Paypal Charges	364
Supplies	200
Travel	189
Miscellaneous Expense	55
Bank Service Charges	10
Total Expense	\$19,022
Net Ordinary Loss	(\$17,714)

Other Income

Interest Income	25
Total Other Income	25
Net Loss	(\$17,689)

For Nine Months Ending September 30, 2009

Upcoming Shows

Location and dates may be subject to change; please contact the show organizers to verify information below. The PCA keeps an up-to-date listing of current and pending U.S. pen shows on the PCA website: pencollectorsofamerica.com.

Philadelphia

January 22–24
Sheraton Philadelphia City Ctr
Bert Oser, 800.82.7680

Los Angeles

February 11–14
Manhattan Beach Marriott
Boris Rice, 281.496.7152

Little Rock

March 12–13
Sam Highsmith

Long Island

March 27–28
Hofstra Univ. Student Center
Terry Brack, 631.235.4690
Mike Bloom, 516.505.5005

Atlanta

April 9–11
Crowne Plaza Atlanta Perimeter NW
Boris Rice, 281.496.7152

Chicago

April 29–May 2
Westin O'Hare
Don Lavin, 847.272.2745

Boston

May 15–16
Rob Morrison, 828.298.0331

Miami

July 15–18
The Biltmore Coral Gables
Bert Oser, 800.82.7680

DC Supershow

August 5–8
Sheraton Premiere Tyson's Corner
Bob Johnson, 864.963.3834

Dallas

September 23–25
Sheraton Dallas North
Pete Kirby, 972.529.6364
Larry Bedinghaus, 972.529.5860

NYC/NJ

October 8–10
Park Central, 7th Ave. & 56th
Maryann and Steve Zucker, 718.434.3713

Show organizers are encouraged to submit show details for this column to the editor.

PCA Pen Show Supporters

The PCA expresses its gratitude to the sponsors of the following pen shows for graciously donating table space. Thanks for your generosity!

Philadelphia • Bert Oser

Los Angeles • Boris Rice, Stan Pfeiffer, and Chris Odgers

Long Island • Terry Brack

Great Southeastern • Jimmy Dolive and Boris Rice

Boston • Rob Morrison

Chicago • Michael Fultz, Daniel Zazove, Donald Lavin

Triangle • Terry Mawhorter

Miami • Bert Oser

Portland • Carla Mortensen

Washington, DC • Bob Johnson

Michigan • Michigan Pen Collectors Club

NYC/NJ • Mary Ann & Steve Zucker

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Pennant Back Issues

Back issues of *The Pennant* are available. Most are photocopies. All are \$10 each + \$5 postage and handling in the U.S. per order, overseas postage will vary. All requests for reprints should be addressed to:

Dan Reppert, PCA Librarian, PCA Library, P.O. Box 447, Fort Madison, IA 52627-0447; e-mail: wasp1908@mchsi.com

1993—March, July, October

1994—February, May, August

1995—Spring/Winter, Fall/Winter

1996—Spring, Winter/Fall

1997—Spring, Winter

1998—Spring, Fall

1999—Spring, Fall, Winter

2000—Spring, Summer, Winter

2001—Spring, Summer, Winter

2002—Spring, Summer, Winter

2003—Spring, Summer, Winter

2004—Spring/Summer, Winter

2005—Spring/Summer, Winter

2006—Spring, Summer, Winter

2007—Spring, Summer, Fall

2008—Spring, Summer, Fall

2009—Spring, Summer, Fall

SPECIAL MEMBERSHIP LEVELS

Upon initial membership, all levels receive a Welcome Packet: three recent issues of *The Pennant*, lapel pin, and website instructions.

PRESIDENT'S CIRCLE LEVEL—\$150 ANNUALLY

- Six issues of *The Pennant*, two of each issue
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- Logo link on PCA website sponsor page
- Two free Classified Ads in *The Pennant*
- Fifty pages of free reprints from the PCA Library
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- Certificate signed by President
- Free library downloads

SPONSOR LEVEL—\$75 ANNUALLY

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- Certificate signed by President
- Free library downloads

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- USA and Canada: \$40 per year or \$105 for three years.
- International: \$60 per year or \$150 for three years.
- Youth/Student: \$20 per year, full-time student or under 18 years of age. Three issues of *The Pennant*
- One Free classified ad in *The Pennant*
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ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP—\$20 ANNUALLY

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- Full voting membership
- Free library downloads
- Excludes *The Pennant* and free classified ads

Members at special sponsor levels will receive certificates redeemable for classified ads and library reprints at time of redemption. Certificates will be included in Sponsor Packet.

The PCA membership year runs from January–December. Membership renewal notices are sent each November to those due to renew. If you join the PCA between Oct. 1 and Dec. 31, your membership is automatically extended through the following year.

As a current member, don't forget to send any updated personal information to info@pencollectorsofamerica.com. If you've moved, changed your name, changed your email, added a FAX line, or made any other changes, it will not be correct in the listings unless you tell us! We are pleased to offer membership levels with added benefits. As a non-profit, all-volunteer organization, the PCA is only as good as the support it receives. Your contributions keep *The Pennant* arriving on your doorstep three times a year, help support the PCA projects and enable the PCA to continue to grow and improve. When you renew your membership this year, we hope you'll consider one of our special new membership levels, which are detailed at the left. Even if your membership is not up for renewal, it's easy to upgrade to one of the special membership levels—simply drop us a line or email us at: info@pencollectors.com. Thanks for your support!

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Contact Carla Mortensen for details: carlamortensen@hotmail.com.*

DENNIS BOWDEN, a retired U.S. Postal Inspector and mostly retired criminal defense attorney, makes his home with his wife Madelyn in the Kansas City suburb of Parkville, Missouri. In addition to Sheaffer Connaisseurs, Dennis collects hard rubber pens with an emphasis on Waterman eyedroppers and Safeties.



VICTOR CHEN recently retired from his position as Professor of History at Chabot College. Chen continues his Tech Notes column, a regular feature in The Pennant.



WILLIAM COWELL is an Audiovisual Preservation Specialist, Nixon Library, National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, MD. He has a small and varied collection of fountain pens, all of which he tries to write with. He does admit to really liking the Targa by Sheaffer.



KATE GLADSTONE teaches and remediates handwriting internationally, working and traveling from her home in Albany, NY. To better help left-handers, she taught herself to write left-handed.



RICHARD JARVIS has spent more than 20 years in journalism, including time as a newspaper reporter and editor. He has suffered from a life-long pen affliction that seems to have no cure in sight. His collecting interests include vintage pens with stub and other specialty nibs as well as German piston-fillers. He lives in Roswell, Ga., and is a native of North Carolina.



KIM SVABIK resigned as a trainer in 2002 after years in corporate America, to pursue being a stay-at-home mom with our son Andrew. Up until 2007 I wasn't real involved in the pen commity. I was busy with Pentiques.com and keeping a home in running order. However, the Detroit pen show changed all that when I volunteered to work the PCA table. After selling 13 memberships at one of the smallest shows, Terry Mawhorter and Rick Propas (President at the time) brought me on to be the "face" of the PCA. Since then, I've initiated visual marketing which is now the PCA booth, take care of membership under Kim Sosin, and find opportunities to link the PCA with outside resources. I've graduated to Executive Assistant to the Board and quite enjoy what I am doing within the community.



RON ZORN, owner of Main Street Pens, started collecting vintage fountain pens in 1988. But after spending \$120 in a big city to have a \$20-value Parker Parkette repaired, he decided that if he wanted to collect, he would have to learn to repair, and so plunged into the world of vintage pen restoration. He can be seen at most pen shows around the country, providing on-site pen repairs to show-goers.



DEDICATED PCA member very interested in vintage pens, vintage pen collecting, vintage pen ephemera, vintage pen magazines, and sharing their expertise and/or experience with pens with The Pennant by writing an article for their favorite vintage pen magazine.



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The Pennant invites you to submit articles of interest to the PCA membership. Contributions should be submitted as email attachments, on floppy disk or on CD or DVD, using standard word processing software.

Articles: We welcome articles dealing with pen collecting, writing instruments, pen manufacturers, ephemera, news about your recent finds, and Letters to the Editor. *The Pennant* "Author's Guidelines" document is available upon request, and members of the editorial staff and PCA Board are available to assist you. Submit your article in Microsoft Word or TextEdit. Please do not use auto-numbering or imbed your images in your text file.

Illustrations/Photos: When submitting images, be certain that they are scanned at no less than 300 pixels per inch. Photos look best on a non-reflective solid white background (lucite is good and foam board works well). If white is not available, any **solid** color will do. Images may be submitted as email attachments or on CD as JPG images. We cannot use images imbedded in text documents or spreadsheets.

Deadlines: Available on request. Contributions are subject to editorial review and should be sent to: PCA, Attn: Editor, *The Pennant*, PO Box 447, Fort Madison, IA 52627-0447 or via email to: editor@pencollectors.com.

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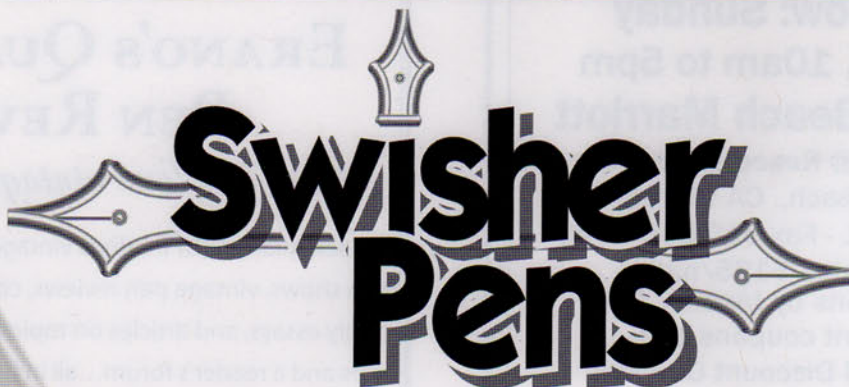
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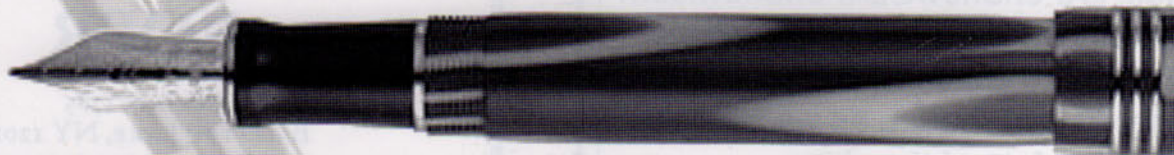
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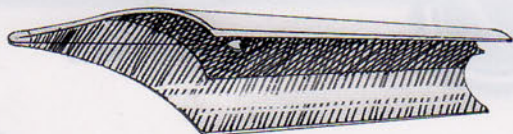
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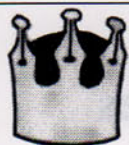
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